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# Follow Treaties, Democrats Urge Gorbachev

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WASHINGTON, March 24 — A group of powerful liberal and centrist Democrats in the House of Representatives have sent a private letter to Mikhail S. Gorbachev warning that the Soviet Union must comply with existing arms control treaties or risk the most "serious consequences for the future of arms control."

The main purpose of the letter to the Soviet leader, several of the signers said, was to send a message to Moscow that arms control advocates as well as critics will insist that existing arms limitation pacts be honored before future ones can be negotiated.

The highly unusual form of communication specifically stated that prospects for a limit on space-based defenses, which is widely seen as Moscow's major goal in the arms control talks in Geneva, "would become much more difficult" without strict compliance.

Twenty-three Representatives signed the letter, including three powerful House members who will deal with future arms treaties: Dante B. Fascell of Florida, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee; Joseph P. Addabbo of Queens, chairman of the Appropriations Committee's subcommittee on defense; and Les Aspin of Wisconsin, chairman of the Armed Services Committee.

The most pointed reference in the letter was to the radar under construction near Krasnoyarsk in central Siberia. Like the Administration, these Democrats contend that the radar, when it starts working in two or three years, will be a violation of the 1972 treaty on antiballistic missiles, or ABM treaty.

If the Krasnoyarsk "problem is not resolved in a satisfactory manner," the letter states, "it will have serious consequences for the future of the arms control process," including eroding "substantive and political support for the ABM treaty itself in the Congress and among the American people."

## Model Was Previous Missive

Several of the signers said the model for their letter was one sent to the South African Ambassador here last December by 35 conservative House members who had not previously spoken out against apartheid. In it, they threatened diplomatic and economic sanctions against Pretoria unless immediate steps were taken to deal with this issue.

"Critics of arms control sending this kind of message could be dismissed by the Soviets," said Representative Stephen J. Solarz, Democrat of Brooklyn. "But they might take the point more seriously when it comes from liberal Democrats with a long track record of support for arms control."

## Administration Approval

Mr. Solarz, Mr. Aspin and Representative Norman D. Dicks of Washington were the prime movers in writing and organizing support for the letter, which they said was delivered to the Soviet Embassy on Friday. Mr. Aspin and Mr. Dicks have also been instrumental in building House backing for the MX missiles.

Administration officials welcomed the letter as an important new sign of Congressional support.

They did so although they are aware that, as Mr. Dicks said in a telephone interview, the signers are "hopeful for a strengthening of the existing ABM

treaty and that the Administration will agree to limits on President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative."

"These will be hard to sell to the Administration if the Soviets are in violation of the present treaty," he added.

So far, Mr. Reagan has insisted that his Strategic Defense Initiative, which is popularly known as "Star Wars," will not be subject to negotiated limits. This is largely because he says he believes defenses are good and moral, and also because of purported Soviet violations such as the Krasnoyarsk phased-array radar.

## Charges of Violation

The Administration's position on the Krasnoyarsk radar is that it is a violation of the ABM treaty on two counts: it is not located on the periphery of Soviet territory, and it faces out, toward what would be the trajectory of incoming missiles, rather than up, as for the satellite tracking that is permissible under the treaty.

A recent analysis of this radar by British intelligence experts concurred that it was a probable violation, but also observed that the treaty language on allowable radars for satellite tracking and monitoring of arms control treaties did not make it an open-and-shut case. The analysis was first disclosed in an article in *The National Journal*, a Washington weekly.

According to Mr. Solarz, "the letter to Mr. Gorbachev is a way of saying that we all have a lot at stake in their honoring existing agreements."